



## STRATEGY



## Birmingham City Council

### Shaping Birmingham's Future Together

In March 2024, the Leader of Birmingham City Council, Councillor John Cotton, announced the launch of [Shaping Birmingham's Future Together](#) (SBFT). This partnership brought together partners from the public, private, education, faith, voluntary and community sectors to tackle inequality and maximise opportunities through a coordinated approach.

The partnership is also about the council working differently - acknowledging we do not have all the answers to everything, and we need to collaborate much more closely with partners and citizens to rebuild trust and strengthen working in collaboration and partnership.

One of the partnership's first tasks was to identify the city's key challenges together, forming the basis for meaningful engagement with citizens and co-producing a shared City Vision and Birmingham Promise.

#### A tale of two cities

Over the past 15 years, Birmingham has seen record investment, leading to significant population growth and the development of new homes, jobs, and businesses, particularly in the city centre. The city, divided into sixty-nine wards and ten parliamentary constituencies, has over seventy urban centres providing essential services.

As of 2023, Birmingham's population is 1,166,000, an 8.5% increase since 2011, and is projected to reach 1,186,000 by 2028. The city is highly diverse, with over half its residents identifying as Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic.

Nearly half the population is under thirty, contributing to its dynamic character, and the city hosts tens of thousands of international students. Birmingham has become the UK's leading city of entrepreneurship.

Despite this, Birmingham faces several challenges. The city has high youth unemployment and a mismatch in educational qualifications, making job placement difficult. Nearly half of its children live in poverty, affecting their health and life expectancy.

Health outcomes are worse than the national average, with higher infant mortality rates and prevalent preventable conditions. The city's internal transport infrastructure needs improvement, and despite reduced air pollution, it still relies heavily on fossil fuel vehicles.



Shaping Birmingham's Future Together logo

### **A summer of engagement**

The first stage of SBFT's journey was to engage extensively with citizens and communities. Over the summer of 2024, more than thirty face-to-face consultations were held at various venues across the city, complemented by eight online sessions.

Community organisations hosted these sessions in areas such as Erdington, Bartley Green, and Handsworth. Additionally, three ward forums were conducted in Stirchley, Small Heath, and Sparkbrook, and six of the city's three hundred Warm Welcome spaces, including Nechells and Sutton Coldfield, were utilised. An e-survey was also conducted to capture a wide range of citizen perspectives, resulting in over 1,500 responses.

This feedback played a vital role in shaping the vision and its priorities, capturing a wide range of perspectives on the issues that matter most to citizens, how they would like the council to address them, and how organisations can collaborate to empower citizens and partners to work together effectively.

The council's Public Participation team organised and led the engagement sessions, and the insight gained from these engagements was analysed by the council's Insight, Policy, and Strategy Team.

### **A vision for Birmingham**

The Birmingham City Vision for 2035 was co-developed and outlines a future where Birmingham grows a thriving economy and tackles inequality, ensuring that all communities can enjoy greater



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opportunities and the well-being that comes with them. The vision draws on Birmingham's rich history and current context, addressing the city's most significant challenges and leveraging its opportunities.



Launch of City Vision

By 2035, Birmingham aspires to be the best city in Europe for young people and a world-leading Anti-Racist City, celebrating its youth and diversity. The vision is for Birmingham to be a healthy, sustainable city, proud of its rich culture and history, and relentlessly addressing all forms of inequality.

Birmingham aims to maintain its status as the UK's leading city of entrepreneurship, harnessing the potential of its young people to build and sustain a thriving economy that benefits all residents.

To deliver this vision, Birmingham has identified five long-term missions, each with specific measures for success.

- Growth and Prosperity in Birmingham
- Knowledge and Opportunity in Birmingham
- Safety and Sustainability in Birmingham
- Health, Equity and Inclusion in Birmingham
- A Connected Birmingham

These priorities must be addressed in a manner that combats the various forms of inequality affecting the city, ensuring that all communities can share in its success.

## **The Birmingham Promise**

The Birmingham Promise, which will be made by the organisations that work in Birmingham (including the city council) to its citizens and each other.

It is also a promise that citizens make to each other establishing a new civic relationship in the city, based on recognising individual and joint responsibilities, and the role we all must play in helping to make our city and our lives the best they can be.

## **Conclusion**

The Shaping Birmingham's Future Together partnership exemplifies how collaborative efforts can lead to a unified vision for a city's future. By engaging a wide range of stakeholders and prioritising community input, Birmingham is setting a precedent for how cities can tackle inequality, maximise opportunities for all residents, and underlines the commitment to keeping residents informed, engaged, and involved in shaping their city's future.

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